

**MINUTES of MEETING of POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE held in the BY SKYPE
on THURSDAY, 13 MAY 2021**

Present: Councillor Robin Currie (Chair)

Councillor Rory Colville	Councillor Yvonne McNeilly
Councillor Mary-Jean Devon	Councillor Aileen Morton
Councillor Bobby Good	Councillor Gary Mulvaney
Councillor Kieron Green	Councillor Douglas Philand
Councillor Jim Findlay	Councillor Alastair Redman
Councillor Jim Lynch	Councillor Elaine Robertson
Councillor David Kinniburgh	Councillor Richard Trail

Attending: Douglas Hendry, Executive Director
Kirsty Flanagan, Executive Director
Laurence Slavin, Interim Head of Financial Services
Jane Fowler, Head of Customer Support Services
Fergus Murray, Head of Development and Economic Growth
Ross McLaughlin, Head of Commercial Services
Patricia O'Neill, Governance Manager

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Audrey Forrest.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none intimated.

3. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 18 February 2021 were approved as a correct record.

4. BUDGET OUTLOOK 2022-23 TO 2026-27

The Committee gave consideration to a report summarising the budget outlook covering the period 2022-23 to 2026-27 taking into consideration the budget decisions taken at the Council meeting held on 25 February 2021. The report was the first outlook of the financial year and was predominantly a roll forward of assumptions used as part of the budget process and extended the budget outlook to 2026-27. The assumptions would be updated and refined as the year progressed.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. Noted the current estimated budget outlook position for the period 2022-23 to 2026-27.
2. Approved the additional £0.712m of one off 2021-22 general revenue grant funding be added to the Council's Recovery and Renewal Fund with proposals on how to use it to be brought forward by officers in due course.

(Reference: Report by Section 95 Officer dated 19 April 2021, submitted)

5. HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP 2020/21 OUTTURN AND DEBT REPAYMENT SCHEDULE

The Committee gave consideration to a report advising of the favourable outturn position of the HSCP in financial year 2020/21 and following a request received from the IJB Chief Financial Officer recommended a revised profile of the remaining outstanding debt.

The Interim Head of Financial Services provided a verbal update on the HSCP outturn which increased it by £79k from the £1.010m in the report to £1.089m; which increases the amount that will be repaid to the Council. In total this brings the debt due to the Council down from £3.848m to £2.759m. This is reflected in a revised debt repayment schedule which will have a repayment in 2024/25 of £759k instead of the £838k in the original report.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. Noted the HSCP favourable outturn position which resulted in a further £1.089m of the outstanding debt being repaid early.
2. Agreed the revised schedule of debt repayment as outlined within paragraph 4.4 of the submitted report and as amended by the verbal update.

(Reference: Report by Section 95 Officer dated 29 April 2021, submitted)

6. RISK MANAGEMENT MANUAL UPDATE

The Committee gave consideration to a report presenting the revised Risk Management Manual which had been amended to reflect changes in current operational practices.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee approved the revised Council Risk Management Manual.

(Reference: Report by Chief Internal Auditor dated 19 April 2021, submitted)

7. FINANCIAL QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee gave consideration to a report presenting the FQ4 2020/21 Performance Report for Financial Services, Commercial Services, Legal and Regulatory Support and Customer Support Services in a revised simplified format commensurate with the Covid-19 situation.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee noted the FQ4 2020/21 Performance Report as presented.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Customer Support Services dated 20 April 2021, submitted)

* **8. SUPPORTING ATTENDANCE AT WORK POLICY**

The Committee gave consideration to a report seeking approval of the revised Supporting Attendance at Work Policy which, if approved, would replace the current Managing Attendance at Work Policy.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee agreed to recommend to Council approval of the new Supporting Attendance at Work Policy.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Customer Support Services dated 17 February 2021, submitted)

9. LORN ARC TAX INCREMENTAL FINANCE PROGRAMME - GENERAL UPDATE ON THE POSITION OF THE PROGRAMME ALONG WITH UPDATES ON SPECIFIC PROJECTS

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on the progress made with regard to the Lorn Arc initiative that utilises additional non-domestic rates income to enable the Council to borrow against for the purposes of infrastructure investment in the Lorn Arc defined area that focuses on Oban and its surrounding area. The update included the latest financial modelling and information to support the recommendations of the report relating to further release to funds to take forward the remaining projects of interest.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. Agreed to the allocation of circa £5,000 covering final costs relating to Project 1 - Kirk Road Upgrade - to the TIF Programme.
2. Agreed to the allocation of up to £640,000 for Project start-up costs relating to Projects 2 : Dunbeg Gateway Features and Project 3 : Halfway House Roundabout.
3. Noted the renewed occupier interest in the Oban Airport Business Park and approved utilising the remainder of the current funding previously approved by the Policy and Resources Committee for Oban Airport Business Park (£107,321) to procure consultancy support to develop the business case to justify further capital investment.
4. Agreed that Officers would look into re-establishing an officer-member working group to take forward proposals and bring a report back to the next Policy and Resources Committee with more detail of the composition and remit of the group.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated 8 April 2021, submitted)

* **10. STRATEGIC EVENTS AND FESTIVALS FUND - ROUND 3 GRANT AWARDS**

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update in regard to Round 3 Strategic Events and Festivals (SEF) Fund for 2021/22. The report sought agreement to approve the award of SEF Grant to 8 strategic events planned to be held during the remainder of 2021/22. In addition the report sought member approval of the process and timing for the call for SEF Round 4.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. Agreed to the award of SEF Round 3 grants as detailed in table 2 with any grant offer only being formally issued upon confirmation from the individual event organisation that the event is formally confirmed and is definitely going ahead and still meets the SEF Round 3 criteria.
2. Agreed to the delegation of powers to the Director of Development and Infrastructure to allow any subsequent amendment to existing grant requests to be made brought about as a consequence of COVID-19 restrictions regarding holding of events/mass gathering in 2021/22. Any amendment to a current grant request/offer would only be considered if the amendment met the SEF criteria and related to either the same level or a reduction in the request from SEF Round 3.
3. Noted that at the February Council budget meeting the Council agreed funding of £90,000 for an SEF Round 4 (2022/23), to be augmented by any underspend in 2020/21.
4. Agreed to recommend to Council that any underspend from SEF Round 3 (2021/22) is earmarked and used to augment future SEF round for 2023/24.
5. Agreed that the SEF Round 4 is launched in October this year with a report to Policy and Resources in February 2022. This follows the same time line for SEF Round 3 and will allow the position with regard to COVID-19 to hopefully be much clearer in regard to the holding of mass events in 2022/23.
6. Agreed that the process for SEF Round 4 follows the same process for SEF Round 3 with an additional point being awarded to those events that had to cancel during 2021/22 and were unable to benefit from SEF grant.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated 9 April 2021, submitted)

11. UK COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUND

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on progress with developing and launching the Argyll and Bute Council UK Community Renewal Fund (UKCRF), and for guidance on determining how to appraise and monitor bids.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee -

1. Noted that the Council launched the UK Community Renewal Fund on 26 April 2021 and applications to the Council were due by 21 May 2021 to allow the projects to be appraised and prioritised before final submission to UK Government by 18th June 2021.
2. Agreed the draft process and agreed to delegate the finalisation of the process and prioritisation as well as the final submission of bids to the Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth in consultation with the Leader, Depute Leader and Leader of the largest opposition group.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated 27 April 2021, submitted)

12. UK LEVELLING UP FUND

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on the UK Levelling Up Fund and the proposed timeline for an Argyll and Bute Council bid to this fund.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. Noted the content of the report and agreed that the Council claim the £125,000 funding to be used to develop two quality bids for a future call for applications.
2. Instructed Officers to bring back a report to Policy and Resources Committee once ideas for future bids have been developed to a stage that require political oversight.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth dated 4 May 2021, submitted)

13. CLIMATE CHANGE BOARD UPDATE

(a) Argyll and Bute Council Carbon Emissions 2019/20 Reporting Requirements

The Committee gave consideration to a report highlighting the Councils overall emissions for the period 2021/22 and outlined that changes to this process would be forthcoming in future months due to change in The Climate Change (Duties of Public Bodies: Reporting Requirements) (Scotland) Amending Order 2020.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee noted –

1. The publication of the Council's 2019/20 carbon emissions report and its continued positive trend highlighting that carbon dioxide equivalent

emissions have reduced by 27% in past 5 years.

2. The recent letter from Rosanna Cunningham MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform outlining that Climate Change 'Reporting Requirements' will be changing from next year and all departments will require to provide a routemap towards net zero and align budget to climate change activities as well as other amendments.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Commercial Services dated 19 April 2021, submitted)

(b) **Decarbonisation Plan Tracker**

The Committee gave consideration to a report presenting the Decarbonisation Action Plan Tracker showing the progress of a number of key actions contained within the De-Carbonisation Plan. The De-carbonisation Plan sets out a number of key actions which contribute towards reducing overall carbon emissions and footprint in Argyll and Bute during 2021.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee noted –

1. The Climate Change Board activity tracker contained within Appendix A of the submitted report.
2. The actions contained within the tracker that contribute towards the Council becoming a net zero organization by 2045 as outlined in our De-carbonisation Plan.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Commercial Services dated 9 April 2021, submitted)

(c) **COP26**

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing an update on preparation which was underway across multi-agencies to facilitate the Conference of the Parties (COP26) scheduled to take place between 1 and 12 November 2021 at Glasgow's Scottish Exhibition Campus. The report advised of a significant opportunity for Argyll and Bute Council to use COP26 as a catalyst for promotion and learning of climate change activities and agreement was sought to a suggested programme of activity had been prepared by the Climate Change Board.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee agreed the proposed engagement and activity plan for COP26 as suggested by the Climate Change Board contained within Appendix A to the submitted report.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Commercial Services dated 9 April 2021, submitted)

(d) **Non-Domestic Energy Efficiency Project (NDEEF) - Full Business Case**

The Committee gave consideration to a report providing a full business case to progress with Argyll and Bute Council's intention to utilise the Scottish Government Non-Domestic Energy Efficiency Framework (NDEEF) to deliver a range of energy efficiency projects at 11no. Council properties.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee –

1. Noted that the Full Business Case had been approved by SMT and DMT which estimated that capital funding of circa £1,271,351 would be invested in 11no. sites to improve non-domestic energy efficiency performance across the Council's estate and had agreed to the signing of an Energy Performance Contract (EnPC).
2. Noted that the Full Business Case estimated revenue savings of £123,539 per annum with aggregated simple payback period of 10.29 years for the 11no. sites. Annual carbon savings of circa 463 Tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent are also anticipated.
3. Noted that based on the impact, affordability (this project is funded using existing approved capital), deliverability and risk for the 11no. sites this project should progress to the signing of an Energy Performance Contract (EnPC) leading to the implementation/delivery stage financed by £1.1m from the Budget commitment and £171,351 of allocated capital works.
4. Agreed revenue savings generated from delivery of this project would be recovered centrally and requests for further funding to support climate change measures, backed up by suitable business case, would be considered.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Commercial Services dated 24 March 2021, submitted)

14. COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 2015 - UPDATE - EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST / ASSET TRANSFER REQUESTS / REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A report advising on the operation of the processes in regard to Asset Transfer Requests and Participation Requests in terms of the Community Empowerment Act 2015 and updates on Asset Transfer Requests, Expressions of Interest and Participation Requests to date was before the Committee for noting.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee noted the content of the report.

(Reference: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Commercial Services dated 8 April 2021, submitted)

15. POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE WORKPLAN

The Policy and Resources Committee Workplan was before the Committee for noting.

Decision

The Policy and Resources Committee noted the content of the workplan as at May 2021.

(Reference: Policy and Resources Committee Workplan dated May 2021, submitted)